

IF CHRISTIANITY IS TRUE, WHY ARE THERE SO MANY HYPOCRITES?

Every few years, the name of another prominent pastor or religious leader and the secrets he has kept are broadcast across the nation in all of their ugliness. Skeptics are quick to ask, "If Christianity is true, why are there so many hypocrites?"

I have three questions I want to deal with today.

WHAT IS A HYPOCRITE? – MATTHEW 23

Jesus identifies some characteristics of hypocrisy:

- *They expect others to do what they say, not what they do (23:1-4).*
- *They do what they do for applause & praise from others (23:5).*
- *They crave the esteem of others (23:6-12).*
- *They strive to look good on the outside while they ignore their junk on the inside (23:25-28).*
- *They judge others for the same wrongs they commit but hide from others (Mt. 7:1-6).*
- *They are the ones most deceived (23:16; 23:17; 23:19; 23:24; 23:26).*

WHO IS A HYPOCRITE?

- *There are unsaved hypocrites (23:28; Rom. 3:10).*
- *There are saved Christians who choose hypocrisy.*
- *There are saved Christians who slip into hypocrisy.*

WHAT DO WE DO ABOUT HYPOCRISY?

- *Instead of expecting others to do what I say and not what I do, I humbly resolve to invite others to follow my example and do what I do.*
- *Instead of doing what I do for the praise of others, I humbly resolve to do what I do for the applause of God.*
- *Instead of craving the respect of others, I humbly resolve to look for opportunities to quietly serve the needs of others.*
- *Instead of striving to look good on the outside while I hide my inside junk, I humbly resolve to...*

- *Instead of judging others for the same wrongs I struggle with, I humbly resolve to eagerly show grace to those who struggle and offer to come along side and walk together towards freedom.*